

RECORD OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON **THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2015** AT 6:00 PM IN THE JAMES F. WALSH SCHOOL COMMITTEE ROOM, 5TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL. STATUTORY NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK.

School Committee Members Present: Ms. Ditkoff (Chairman), Ms. Scotto (Vice Chairman), Mr. Chang (arrived at 7:55 PM), Ms. Charlupski, Mr. Glover, Dr. Jackson, Mr. Pollak, and Ms. Stram. School Committee members absent: Ms. Stone. Also present: Dr. Lupini, Mr. Rowe, Dr. Fischer-Mueller, Dr. Shmukler, Mr. Kahn, and Ms. Coyne.

Others Present: Lynne Cohen, Ann Collins, Teri Hauserman, Alyssa Henry, Leon Kestenbaum, Steve Lantos, Nick Rothstein, and Pipier Smith-Mumford.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

a. Calendar

Ms. Ditkoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She noted upcoming events on the calendar.

b. Consent Agenda

ACTION 15-35

On a motion of Dr. Jackson and seconded by Mr. Glover, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the items included in the Consent Agenda.

- i. Past Record: May 21, 2015 School Committee Meeting
- ii. Signature Authority for Summer Months (Attachment A)
- iii. Out-of-State Student Trip: Brookline High School Boys Rowing Team to National High School Rowing Championships in Tampa, Florida; June 11, 2015-June 15, 2015 (Attachment B)
- iv. Out-of-Country Student Trip: Brookline High School Model United Nations Club to Berlin, Germany; November 17, 2015-November 22, 2015 (Attachment C)
- v. Out-of State Student Trip: Brookline High School Sojourn to the Past Civil Right Tour to Atlanta, Georgia and Montgomery and Birmingham, Alabama; February 12, 2016-February 18, 2016 (Attachment D)
- vi. Out-of-Country Student Trip: Brookline High School Mexico Trip; February 13, 2016-February 27, 2016 (Attachment E)

2. STAFF RECOGNITIONS

a. Teachers/Staff with 30 Years of Service

Dr. Lupini welcomed Lynne Cohen (Brookline High School), Teri Hauserman (Pierce School), Alyssa Henry (Baker School), Leon Kestenbaum (Brookline High School), Steve Lantos (Brookline High School), and Pipier Smith-Mumford (Pierce School). *Mary Dunne (Driscoll Pre-kindergarten Program) was also recognized, but*

was unable to attend.) Dr. Lupini read statements that highlighted each of the staff members' achievements and contributions to the school community. Dr. Lupini and the School Committee expressed their sincere appreciation to the honorees for all they have done for our students and presented them with a gift.

3. WELCOME BACK TO BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS RETURNING FROM CHINA

Dr. Lupini introduced Brookline China Exchange Coordinator Steve Lantos. Mr. Lantos introduced Teacher-Chaperone Andrew Kimball to recognize the students who participated in this year's Exchange: Max Feldstein-Nixon, Lillian Hartman, Emma Chan Karim, Ada Levine, Karun Mahadevan, Ayden Mallory, Rebecca Regis, and Rachel Zank. Mr. Kimball and the students expressed their appreciation to the School Committee and the school administration for providing this opportunity. They talked about their experiences and the long-term impact of participation in this program. The School Committee members thanked the students for sharing their insights.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Finance

Ms. Ditkoff reported that the Finance Subcommittee met on May 18, 2015 to discuss the Public Schools of Brookline 5-Year Budget Projection and the FY 2016 Budget.

b. Capital Improvements

Mr. Rowe provided updates on the Lawrence, Baker, Upper Devotion and Devotion K-4 projects. Ms. Charlupski reported that on June 3, 2015 the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) voted unanimously to approve an estimated Total Facilities Grant of \$25,910,852 for the Devotion project. School Committee members expressed their appreciation to the MSBA, the administration, the Devotion teachers and leaders, and the community. Mr. Pollak reported that the Devotion School Construction Management At Risk Selection Committee met on May 28, 2015 and voted to finalize the contract. The Devotion School Architectural Design and Site Design Working Groups will be meeting on June 9, 2015 and the Devotion Building Committee will be meeting on July 14, 2015.

c. Curriculum

Ms. Charlupski reported that the Curriculum Subcommittee will be meeting on June 10, 2015. The agenda will include the Driscoll School Improvement Plan, the Brookline High School Opportunity for Change (OFC) Program, Strategic Plan data, and plans for next year.

d. Government Relations

Ms. Charlupski provided an update on the state budget, which is now in Conference Committee. Dr. Lupini reported that the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents is preparing a report on school testing.

e. Policy Review

i. Proposed Changes to Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) Policy on Student Admissions (Section J1a) – 1st Reading

Dr. Jackson reported that the Policy Review Subcommittee met on May 13, 2015 to discuss proposed revisions to the PSB Policies on Student Admissions and Student Attendance. The Subcommittee voted to move both policies to first reading.

Dr. Jackson explained the proposed PSB Policy on Student Admissions (Attachment F).

As part of our regular review of policies, this policy was reviewed for any needed changes since last voted on in June of 2014. The review of this policy focused only on admissions for students who reside in Brookline. There is a separate policy for non-residents students who attend Brookline Schools through program such as METCO and Materials Fee. As Brookline is in the relatively unique position to receive students who are in the area for temporary reasons (e.g., parents in fellowships, family members or students receiving medical treatment), the School Administration asked the School Committee to review the policy with the aim of clarifying the definition of residency that is permanent and residency that is temporary. Given our over-crowded schools and the educational challenges that adding students to classrooms for only a short period of time presents teachers and other students, the policy needed to be more specific on when temporary resident students would be admitted to the district and when they would not be admitted. Prior to this first reading the subcommittee met and discussed this policy on multiple occasions. We received input from legal counsel and examined the policies of other school districts. The policy has also been posted on the website to solicit any feedback or input from the community.

The subcommittee voted and proposes to maintain a six-month minimum for temporary residency. As stated in the policy, "If the student is temporarily residing the Brookline for six months or more but less than one school or calendar year, the student may attend PSB at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools or designee and on a tuition basis." The policy does have exceptions to the residency requirements under section V including participation in METCO, enrollment in special programs, tuition paying students, and students entitled to attend the PSB under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

One issue we discussed at length in regard to this policy is the notion of compassionate exceptions to the policy. Compassionate exceptions – where and how do we make exceptions to the rule especially when compassion may be called for (e.g., student and/or family member receiving medical treatment in the area for a limited amount of time). On compassionate exceptions, the Subcommittee concluded that parents and families do retain a choice as to where and how to educate their children when receiving medical treatment. While Brookline is near Boston where much medical treatment is received, parents also have the option to education their children in the Boston Public School system or elsewhere. While parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children are

educated, Brookline is not required to admit students who do not meet our standards for temporary or permanent residency.

Ms. Scotto stated that she will not vote for this policy, as currently written, because she does not believe it is in the best interest of children. Children who live in Brookline for less than six months would not be able to attend our schools. This would include children who are here for their own or family members' medical treatment at area hospitals. The proposed policy does not give the Superintendent discretion to make exceptions for compassionate reasons. The policy should allow for exceptions for families that are here for medical treatment and tuition should be waived when financial need is demonstrated. Some of these families do not live nearby, so it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the students to attend school in their home district.

Other School Committee members spoke in support of the proposed changes to the policy, noting that while we care about the wellbeing of all children, we need to consider the potential impact on teachers and students. It is difficult to meet the needs of all students when there are children moving in and out for short periods of time. Dr. Shmukler talked about the impact of this "churn" at the classroom and staff level. She noted the services the system provides to students getting medical treatment, including sending tutors to hospitals. In response to a question from Mr. Glover, Dr. Lupini stated that he will look at the potential impact of providing discretion to admit temporary residents who cannot attend school in their home district due to medical needs. Dr. Lupini and Dr. Shmukler explained the steps implemented over the past year to tighten up residency procedures.

Dr. Shmukler was asked to provide additional data on the percentage of students that are here for medical reasons. She believes this is a small percentage. Dr. Jackson stated that a 2nd Reading/Vote on the proposed policy is scheduled for June 16, 2015. The next meeting of the Policy Review Subcommittee will be moved to June 15, 2015 so that the Committee has the opportunity to continue to look at this issue.

ii. Proposed Changes to Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) Policy on Student Attendance (Section J3) – 2nd Reading/Vote

Dr. Jackson explained the proposed PSB Policy on Student Attendance (Attachment G).

As part of our regular review of policies, this policy was reviewed for any needed changes since last voted on in January 2012. In addition to general updating of the policy to make current with other policies and practices, the Subcommittee clarified the definitions of excused and unexcused absences. One clarification proposed is that in addition to students being excused with documentation for college-related trips and interviews, students who are being interviewed for any formal opportunity outside of school, including work, postsecondary opportunities including college and others, and internships, will be excused with the presentation of proper documentation. Given the range of opportunities our students have and may need for their success, we felt focusing on college was too restrictive. The prior policy did not provide a definition of unexcused

absences which the policy now does, specifically calling out family vacations as unexcused. It is critical that upon approval of this policy that all schools, the high school in particular, align its handbook and all procedures in accordance with this policy. The one public comment we received about this policy was a concern that clear consequences for failure to attend be made explicit at the high school in its procedures and practices.

The 2nd Reading/Vote on this policy is scheduled to take place on June 16, 2015.

f. Additional Liaisons and Updates

Ms. Charlupski reported that she attended the EDCO Board meeting today. The agenda included the FY 2016 budget, membership assessment rates, and a one-year pilot program allowing non-members who may be considering membership in EDCO to participate in roundtables for one year at a reduced rate.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one signed up for Public Comment.

6. STUDENT REPORT

Mr. Kahn reported that he was re-elected Student Representative for the 2015-2016 school year. He noted various events at the High School, including Senior Week, the prom, the After-the-Prom party, and graduation (June 7, 2015). An ad hoc committee was formed to discuss the school dress code. Course scheduling for next year is underway. Four teachers will be retiring at the end of this year: Abby Erdmann, Ric Calleja, Ellen Lewis, and Allyson Toney. Ms. Ditkoff expressed the School Committee's gratitude to the many members of the community who work together to make the After-the-Prom Party such an extraordinary event.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lupini provided the following report:

Introduction of New Principals for 2015-2016

Annie Sevelius will serve as Interim Principal at Heath School for the coming school year. Prior to coming to Heath, Ms. Sevelius served as Principal (2009-2013) and Vice Principal (2005-2009) of The Conservatory Lab Charter School in Boston. Her leadership experience there included overseeing the implementation of the teacher evaluation system, leading professional development, monitoring and tracking student achievement growth data, and providing conflict management and crisis intervention. We are thrilled that Annie has agreed to assume this Interim role for the 2015-2016 school year. Ms. Sevelius received a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature at Indiana University; Masters in Educational Leadership at Lesley University and expects to complete a doctoral program at the Lynch School of Education at Boston College in May of 2016.

Jennifer Buller has been appointed as Principal of Devotion School (grades k-3) for the 2015-2016 school year. Ms. Buller joined the staff of the Devotion School as Vice

Principal in September of 2014. Prior to 2014, she served as a 1st through 4th grade classroom teacher and a co-teacher in an inclusion classroom at the Heath School. Jen has been a member of the Child Study Team, the School Council, the Technology Leadership team and the town wide Social Studies Curriculum Review and Revision Committee. In 2008 Ms. Buller was a co-recipient of the Charlie Baker Legacy Award. She has also worked as a teaching artist and program developer for the Wheelock Family Theater, a program interpreter and overnight teacher at the Boston Children's Museum, and a kindergarten teacher in Wilton, Connecticut. Ms. Buller holds degrees from Simmons College; a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Early Education, a Master of Arts in Elementary Education, and a Master of Science in Educational Leadership.

***David O'Hara** will serve as Principal of Devotion School (grades 4-6) for the coming school year. Dave has been a part of the Devotion family since he began his career in Brookline in 1988 as a Physical Education teacher. In 2000, he accepted the position of Vice Principal, a role that he has held for the last 14 years. In addition, David held the role of Elementary Curriculum Coordinator for Physical Education, as well as coach and mentor to countless Devotion teams. His steady presence has been invaluable to the Devotion School over these past 27 years. Mr. O'Hara received a Bachelor in Science in Physical Education from Springfield College and a Master of Arts in Human Movement from Boston University.*

***Eileen Driscoll Woods** has been appointed as Interim Principal of Driscoll School for the 2015-2016 school year during Heidi Cook's leave. Dr. Woods is currently serving as Interim Principal at the Walton School in Wakefield and served for the previous two years Interim Principal at the Dallin School in Arlington. Prior to her retirement she worked in the Andover Public Schools for 22 years as Principal of Sanborn Elementary School (1985-1991), Assistant Superintendent (1991-1992), and Principal of South Elementary School (1992-2008). Eileen was named Massachusetts Principal of the Year in 1998. Colleagues comment on her passion for the work, her collaborative nature, and her efforts as a mentor for teachers and school leaders.*

Kindergarten (2015-2016)

Kindergarten enrollment for the coming school year stands at 574 students as of Friday, May 29, 2015. This number includes 20 METCO students and 17 students registered through the Materials Fee program. Based on prior year models, we are still anticipating a kindergarten class of approximately 650 students on the first day of school. Orientation programs for students and families will take place at each of our schools during the weeks of June 1st and June 8th.

Director of Human Resources

We are currently scheduling interviews for the Director of Human Resources position, following four weeks of recruitment and review of applications. We received 24 applications for this position and will interview 8 individuals during the week of June 8th. The following individuals will join me as members of this interview team: Monica Crowley (Principal, Upper Devotion School), Jill Kennedy (Human Resources

Specialist), Anthony Meyer (Dean – Brookline High School), and Christina Palmer (Director of Guidance and Clinical Services). We anticipate that final interviews (with a team including Senior Staff and Rick Rogers, Principal – Lawrence School) will take place during the week of June 15th and that a successful candidate could be appointed on or before Friday, June 26, 2015.

Vice Principal Searches

Search processes are currently underway to fill Vice Principal positions at Baker School (Denrod Fowler is leaving Baker School and will be pursuing opportunities closer to his home), Heath School (Annie Sevelius will serve as Interim Principal for the coming year), and Upper Devotion (new position).

[Mr. Chang arrived at 7:55 PM.]

8. SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTIONS

a. Appointment to EDCO Collaborative Board of Directors for 2015-2016

ACTION 15-36

On a motion of Ms. Ditkoff and seconded by Dr. Jackson, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to appoint Ms. Charlupski to the EDCO Collaborative Board of Directors for 2015-2016.

c. Appointment to EDCO Collaborative Advisory Council for 2015-2016

ACTION 15-37

On a motion of Ms. Ditkoff and seconded by Dr. Jackson, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to appoint Dr. Lupini to the EDCO Collaborative Advisory Council for 2015-2016.

9. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS OF CURRENT ISSUES

a. Report on Brookline High School Sojourn Civil Rights Trip

Dr. Lupini introduced Brookline High School teachers Nick Rothstein and Ann Collins and students (Lily Harris, Chris Hakimian, Gabe Doyle, Kamran Sahkitab, Maia Sutton, Melanie Rodriguez, Nina Levine, Dahana Smith Rose, Maya Jakubowski, Serra Muftu, Sophia Vos, Karina Darosa, Simone St. Pierre, and Juliette Shoemaker) to present a report on the Brookline High School Sojourn Civil Rights Trip. Sojourn provides a hands-on learning experience that uses the lens of the Civil Rights Movement to teach lessons in human rights that are relevant to current societal issues such as bullying, violence, hatred and discrimination. Students meet with veterans of the Movement and study with them at the influential sites that changed the course of human rights in America. The students expressed their appreciation to the School Committee and provided an overview of the trip. The students talked about what they learned from this experience and their plans to encourage social activism and civic participation. They have discussed developing a curriculum that teachers could adapt for their classrooms. The students plan to encourage other students to participate in this program in future years. School Committee members thanked the students for their moving presentation.

10. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

11. PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

By unanimous roll call vote at 8:35 PM, the School Committee entered into Executive Session to consider the purchase, lease or value of real property because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the School Committee's bargaining position. Ms. Ditkoff noted that the School Committee will reconvene in open session at the end of the executive session for the purpose of adjourning. By unanimous roll call vote at 9:45 PM, the School Committee reconvened in public session.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ditkoff adjourned the meeting at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin E. Coyne, Executive Assistant
Brookline School Committee